

SEIU Local 140 Newsletter 12.9.23

Take Action!

- Sign our [strike pledge!](#)
- [RSVP: The District That Stole "Christmas" party.](#) Sunday 12/10, 1-3pm, University Place Hotel, 310 SW Lincoln St
- Upcoming bargaining session 12/11 at SEIU
- Board meeting 12/12, 6pm at PEC

Union Updates

Bargaining Updates

The bargaining team sent additional counter-proposals to the district on December 1 in preparation for our next bargaining session on December 11. We have not received any responses from the district since we last shared proposals on October 31. It appears that the district has been delaying bargaining and is trying to blame it on the teacher strike. Now more than ever it is important that we refuse to let the district try to divide our unions by claiming that they don't have any money left after the teachers' settled their contracts. PPS will do anything to try to pit us against each other in order to weaken our bargaining power. One example of this tactic is by spreading rumors that teachers are trying to get custodians in trouble by reporting unsafe conditions in their classrooms. In fact, since the strike there has been increased solidarity between SEIU, PFSP, and PAT members. It is important to continue building these relationships because we will need to rely on each other in order to win our fight for fair contracts and thriving public schools.

Please join us for bargaining from 1-5 on Monday the 11th at SEIU (525 NE Oregon St.) You can also support the bargaining team by signing our strike pledge and by showing up at the board meeting next Tuesday the 12th at PEC (501 N Dixon St.)

Union Elections

There will be elections coming up for positions on our union's executive team as well as the SEIU 503 general council delegates. The positions on the executive team are two co-chairs, one nutrition service rep at large and one custodial rep at large and a secretary/treasurer who can be either a custodian or nutrition services worker. The executive team provides structure to our union and is an opportunity to get more involved with decision making and organizing for our sub-local. They generally meet once a month outside of membership meetings.

The role of the general council delegates is to attend the SEIU 503 statewide general council in August and represent our sublocal in the decision making process. General council meets every 2 years to pass resolutions and help set the direction of the union. As a sublocal we can also endorse resolutions to be voted on at the general council.

Nominations for Local 140 executive committee positions as well as general council delegates will open December 11, 2023 and close January 26, 2024. Voting will begin February 17, and close April 7. You can learn more about our union's governance structure including information on elections, committees, and the general council in our [bylaws](#).

Local Solidarity

Building Solidarity with PPS Workers

While the teachers have settled their contract, SEIU, PFSP, and DCU continue to fight to win fair contracts for their members. The teachers have demonstrated the power of collective action through a strike and have helped create a sense of unity city-wide in fighting for the funding necessary to respect workers and provide quality public education. Currently, PFSP and SEIU are on similar bargaining timelines with mediation set to begin on January 17th and 18th respectively. This means that if we declare an impasse at a similar date, we could potentially decide to go on strike at the same time. Of course, this requires that our members vote to authorize a strike if bargaining is unsuccessful.

In the meantime, be sure to ask your colleagues in PFSP and DCU how to support their campaigns, and share information with them about our campaign. You can show solidarity by wearing green for PFSP on Thursday and blue for PAT on Tuesday. Encourage others in your building to wear purple to support SEIU on Wednesdays.

International Solidarity

Children for a Ceasefire March

SEIU members joined a children's march for a ceasefire last Saturday which gathered at Grant Park before marching to the house of Representative Earl Blumenauer. Despite Oregon Senator Jeff Merkley [calling for a ceasefire](#) last week, none of Oregon's other congresspeople have taken a stand. Those assembled included healthcare workers as well as a contingent of educators and other PPS workers who held signs reading "From Portland to Palestine, all kids deserve to thrive. Fund schools not genocide!". Members of PAT shared a solidarity statement which read, in part:

"We are ashamed of the district's statement of neutrality on Israeli apartheid, genocide, the continued invalidation of our Palestinian students' and families' heritage and identities, and the censorship of pro Palestinian messaging multiple union members of our coalition have experienced in just the last few weeks. We firmly believe open support for our Palestinian community does not dismiss the pain and lived experience of our Jewish community. Palestinian students and families of PPS, we, and many more educators across our district, stand with you.

We urge our whole PPS community to be unified in demanding a ceasefire and to stop the billions of US tax dollars funding the Israeli military. We must demand an end to genocide and start peaceful negotiations for a decolonized and independent Palestine. Palestinian children have a right to their futures and to thrive in their present.”

After speeches, the march set off in the rain through the affluent neighborhood surrounding Grant High School. Chants of “Ceasefire Now”, “Free, Free Palestine” and others were heard as marchers eventually made their way to Blumenauer’s residence. After a brief assembly in front of his house, the crowd returned to the park where different groups were tabling and handing out fliers. There will be many more opportunities to show solidarity with Palestine and we will continue covering the struggle for Palestinian liberation in our newsletter.

Strike Against Tesla

A [strike](#) of workers in Sweden demanding a collective bargaining agreement with Tesla has grown into a much larger series of walkouts as a Swedish postal union, Danish dockworkers and even a union in Finland have joined the strike in solidarity. It remains to be seen what effects this will have on Tesla workers here in the US where the company has consistently pushed back on any efforts to unionize. Tesla CEO Elon Musk has long billed himself as the epitome of a free market advocate, all while receiving billions in [subsidies](#) for his corporations. Musk has been accused by many of crafting an environment of racism, anti-semitism and misinformation on the platform X, formerly known as Twitter, which he purchased in 2022.

Starbucks Stock in Decline

Through strikes, targeted boycotts, and tireless organizing, workers at Starbucks are demonstrating the power of their collective action. Over the last 2 weeks, Starbucks has lost nearly \$11 billion in market value as [share prices decline](#). This is due to the success of Starbucks Workers United, the union of Starbucks baristas which has unionized over 370 stores nationwide. On “Red Cup Day” nearly 5,000 workers went on strike, disrupting what is normally the coffee chain’s most profitable day. SBWU has filed over 200 unfair labor practice charges against Starbucks for repeated illegal attempts at union busting. Workers have also expressed their [solidarity with Palestine](#) despite condemnation by the company for doing so. As they continue their struggle for a fair contract, workers are calling for supporters to refuse to buy starbucks gift cards this season and continue to call on Starbucks to negotiate in good faith with SBWU.